

CLASS I RECALL
HEALTH RISK: HIGH
9113

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Steven Cohen (202) 720-

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NEW JERSEY FIRM EXPANDS RECALL OF POULTRY PRODUCTS FOR POSSIBLE *LISTERIA* CONTAMINATION

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20, 2002 –Jack Lambersky Poultry Company Inc., doing business as J.L. Foods Company Inc., a Camden, N.J., establishment, is voluntarily recalling approximately 4.2 million pounds of fresh and frozen, ready-to-eat poultry products, mostly turkey and chicken breasts, that may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service announced today.

The products, which are listed in the attachment, were produced between May 29 and Nov. 2 and distributed to retail stores and institutions nationwide. Each product bears the establishment code "EST. P-4340" inside the USDA seal of inspection.

The sample that tested positive for *Listeria monocytogenes* was collected on Nov. 14 as part of the continuing joint investigation by FSIS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention into the cause of the outbreak of listeriosis that has sickened 52 people and resulted in seven deaths in eight Northeastern states. The sample is being further analyzed to determine whether or not it matches the outbreak strain.

The recall is an expansion of the Nov. 2 recall of similar products totaling 200,000 pounds. The product from the earlier recall was determined to be contaminated with a strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* that was indistinguishable from that of the outbreak victims.

“Public health is our top priority,” said Dr. Garry L. McKee, FSIS administrator. “Consumers should check their refrigerators and freezers for products involved in this recall and return them to the point of purchase.”

“I commend the work of the investigative teams from FSIS and the CDC for their ongoing aggressive investigation into the source of the outbreak,” said Dr. Elsa Murano, undersecretary for food safety.

Consumption of food contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* can cause listeriosis, an uncommon but potentially fatal

LISTERIA PRECAUTIONS

**USDA Meat and Poultry
Hotline**

**1-800-535-4555 or visit
www.fsis.usda.gov**

People at risk for listeriosis and their family members or individuals preparing food for them should:

Reheat until steaming hot the following types of ready-to-eat foods: hot dogs, luncheon meats, cold cuts, fermented and dry sausage and other deli-style meat and poultry products. Thoroughly reheating food can help kill any bacteria that might be present. If you cannot reheat these foods, then do not eat them.

Wash hands with hot, soapy water after handling these types of ready-to-eat foods. (Wash for at least 20 seconds.) Also wash cutting boards, dishes, and utensils. Thorough washing helps eliminate any bacteria that might get on your hands or other surfaces from food before it is reheated.

Do not eat soft cheeses such as feta, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined or Mexican-style cheese. You can eat hard cheeses, processed cheeses, cream cheese, cottage cheese and yogurt.

Do not drink raw, unpasteurized milk or eat foods made from it, such as unpasteurized cheese.

disease. Healthy people rarely contract listeriosis. Listeriosis can cause high fever, severe headache, neck stiffness and nausea. Listeriosis can also cause miscarriages and stillbirths, as well as serious and sometimes fatal infections in infants, seniors and those with compromised immune systems.

Consumers with questions about the recall may contact Kenneth Martin, general manager, J.L. Foods Company Inc., at (800) 881-3250. Media with questions about the recall may contact Vince Mazzi, sales manager, J.L. Foods Company Inc., at (800) 881-3250.

Consumers with other food safety questions can phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time), Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

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NOTE: Access news releases and other information at the FSIS Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>

USDA RECALL CLASSIFICATIONS

Class I This is a health hazard situation where there is a reasonable probability that the use of the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.

Class II This is a health hazard situation where there is a remote probability of adverse health consequences from the use of the product.

Class III This is a situation where the use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences.